

Hepatitis C, Chronic

Background. Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV).[^] HCV is spread primarily by direct contact with human blood. Chronic infection occurs in approximately 75-85% of people infected with HCV. Chronic liver disease occurs in approximately 70% people with chronic Hepatitis C. Nationally, the number of new infections per year has declined from an average of 240,000 in the 1980s to about 25,000 in 2001.

[^] *CDC > National Center for Infectious Diseases > Viral Hepatitis C. Health Topics A to Z.*

Reporting. In Missouri, Hepatitis C has been a reportable disease for over five years. However, chronic Hepatitis C only became a distinct reportable disease in 2002. Cases are reported to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) through the Missouri Health Surveillance Information System (MOHSIS). Based on a combination of clinical and laboratory criteria, cases are assigned a status of confirmed, probable, suspect, etc. Due to changes in disease definition, a combination of confirmed, probable, suspect, etc. cases are presented here.

